

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

18-32

Orleans

EAS.1324

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Address: 15 Seaview Road

Historic Name: Charles and Frieda Steele House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: ca. 1928

Source: Title research, 1929 Cape Cod Directory

Style/Form: Craftsman/ Bungalow

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
None

Major Alterations (*with dates*):
None on record.

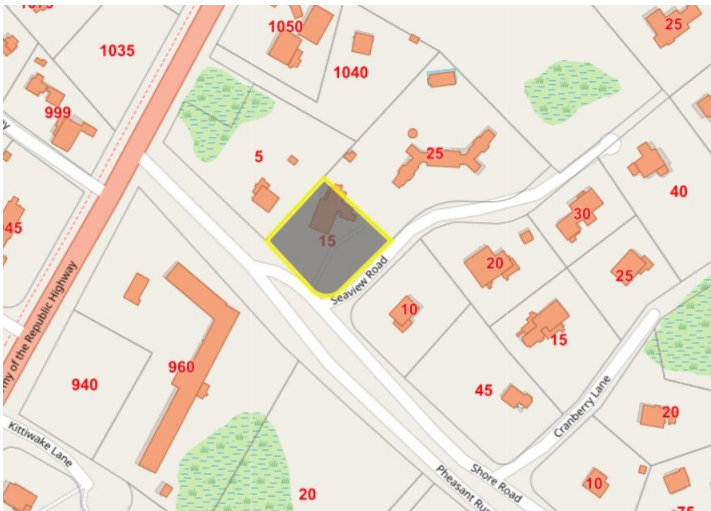
Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.37 acres

Setting: This property is located just east of the State Highway in an area that includes 20th century houses on varying sized lots and a motel to the southwest. This house is set back on a slight rise and faces Seaview Road. An asphalt driveway leads up to the north side of the house. The property is open with lawn around the house and a few foundation plantings. Mature evergreen and deciduous shrubbery and trees along the street partially obscure the house from view.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

15 SEAVIEW ROAD

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Charles and Frieda Steele House, built in ca. 1928, is a charming, intact example of a Craftsman Bungalow. Character-defining features include the overall 1 ½-story, side-gable form, the roof extending forward on the front elevation for a porch, the centered shed dormer on the front roof slope, and the roof with its deeply-projecting open eaves. The elevations are clad in wood shingles with plain cornerboards. Fenestration includes modern, thermal 3/1 double-hung sash, and banks of 1/1 windows in the enclosed porch on the front elevation. In addition to the main block, there is a one-story rear ell, and a one-story side ell with a central gable-front form that may have begun as a separate outbuilding.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

In February 1926, Charles A. and Florence Rogers sold a large parcel of land that extended from the State Highway to Town Cove that included this property.¹ In January 1927, Eldredge and Sparrow recorded a subdivision of the land and called it Cove Bluffs, with this parcel identified as Lot 31.² Two months later, they sold Lot 31 to Charles M. Steele of Eastham.³ He appears to have built this house right away – he is listed in Dunham's 1929 Cape Cod Directory in a house he owns off the State Highway.

Eastham-born Charles Malcom Steele (1904-1971) married Orleans-born Frieda Moulton (1905-2006) in Orleans in 1928. This house was likely built as their first home. Charles worked as a barber. They retired to St. Petersburg, FL and sold this house in 1968 to Cove Bluffs Motel, Inc.⁴ The property became part of disparate collection of properties in Eastham that changed hands multiple times, culminating in 2021, when Thomas E. and Noreen A. Thompson of Eastham sold this and another parcel to Sebastian Taffera and Rosa Simpson of Eastham.⁵

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 429/ Page 548.

² Plan Book 19/ Page 123.

³ Book 443/ Page 85.

⁴ Book 1402/ Page 1153.

⁵ Book 34052/ Page 55.

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EASTHAM

15 SEAVIEW ROAD

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BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

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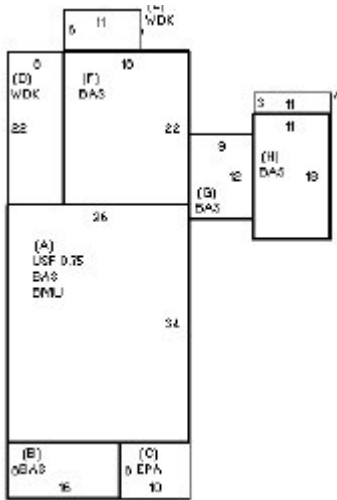


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch.



Photo 2. View looking northeast.